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ELIGIBILITY WORKER SERIES

Series Definition:

The objective of public assistance programs is to ensure that individuals and families have or are provided with sufficient resources to obtain food, clothing, shelter, medical care and other essentials. This is accomplished by: (1) determining the eligibility of applicants/recipients for public assistance; (2) orienting applicants/recipients to services available; and (3) directing applicants/recipients to appropriate sources for assistance.

The major factors in determining eligibility are:

- a) conditions of eligibility which relate to family relationships, work history, medical conditions and other social conditions of the applicant/recipient;
- b) means test--applicant/recipient's income and resources must be within certain levels; and
- c) program requirements which are designed to assist the client in becoming independent/more self-sufficient e.g., job search requirement).

This series includes all positions which involve the supervision or performance of work which requires a specialized knowledge of public assistance programs and pertinent laws, rules, regulations and procedures, and the ability to apply this knowledge in order to determine the eligibility of individuals for public assistance.

The work of positions in this series involves providing public welfare program information; fact-finding, which includes a review of the individual's self-declaration form and supporting documents, obtaining selected information through interviews, home visits and/or other collateral contacts; establishing eligibility including program categorical eligibility through the application of pertinent policies, laws, rules, regulations and procedures; authorizing money payments or other items such as food stamp coupons; documenting facts and pertinent

regulations/policies relating to eligibility determinations; and assisting individuals in identifying related problems and needs, explaining and encouraging the use of various agency and community resources and making appropriate referrals. The work also includes managing assigned caseloads, preparing various reports, attending hearings and other related duties and responsibilities.

Eligibility Workers require significant skill in their many and varied public contacts. The most significant are the daily contacts with applicants/recipients who generally are the most disadvantaged people in the community and frequently are not informed, articulate or otherwise equipped to deal with the technicalities of eligibility requirements. In addition, applicants/recipients are frequently under a great deal of stress since public assistance is commonly viewed as the "last resort". Under these conditions, Eligibility Workers must explain eligibility criteria, obtain pertinent information including deciding and then explaining to clients what is acceptable verification of information, explaining and assuring that clients understand their rights and responsibilities, establishing a positive relationship with clients in order to assist them in identifying/articulating various social needs or problems and making the appropriate referrals. The worker also assists clients in their decision-making process by presenting the facts and viable alternatives and the advantages and disadvantages of such alternative.

Contacts are also established with individuals and representatives of various public and private agencies in order to obtain pertinent information and/or to refer recipients for services.

The Eligibility Worker must tactfully explore the client's social/personal, physical and financial situation, evaluate and integrate all factors in relation to the rules, regulations and procedures of the various public assistance programs, determine the client's categorical eligibility and authorize money payments or other items such as food stamps.

Eligibility Workers are guided by Federal and State regulations, policies and procedures but must exercise a great deal of judgment and discretion in understanding the intent of policies; in deciding which types of evidence serve as sufficient verification; and in identifying those particular issues which

are relevant to the client's situation and ultimately relate to the client's eligibility or ineligibility for assistance.

This series also includes those positions responsible for conducting internal review or validation studies to verify adequacy of eligibility determinations, thereby contributing to the program evaluation and development process.

Levels of distinctions within the series are based primarily upon the following classification factors:

1. Nature and Complexity of Work
2. Nature of Supervision Received
3. Nature of Person-to-Person Contacts
4. Nature and Extent of Supervision Exercised
5. Knowledge and Abilities Required

This is the first specification for the new ELIGIBILITY WORKER SERIES.

Note: Class title was changed from Income Maintenance Worker to Eligibility Worker, effective April 29, 2002.

DATE APPROVED: 4/17/80      /s/ Wayne J. Yamasaki  
DONALD BOTELHO  
Director of Personnel Services

ELIGIBILITY WORKER I

3.082

Duties Summary:

As an entry level trainee, receives training in the philosophy, goals, functions, policies and procedures of State and Federal Public Assistance programs; recommends and/or determines eligibility for public assistance on selected cases; and performs other duties as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This class reflects a beginning level of assignment where an Eligibility Worker receives on-the-job and classroom training in matters relating to the correct application of regulations pertaining to eligibility determinations; the philosophy and standards of services for the department's public assistance programs; and public and private agencies' roles and services.

The least complicated cases are selected as first assignments for an incumbent of this class and are performed under close supervision. As the Eligibility Worker demonstrates an understanding of basic responsibilities, routine work is performed with less supervision and the worker may be authorized to independently determine eligibility and authorize payments for selected cases. In addition, work of a gradually more complex nature is assigned for training purposes. A supervisor is always available to provide instruction and assistance on all new assignments and as otherwise necessary.

Examples of Duties:

Receives training in the philosophy, goals, functions, policies, and procedures relative to assigned public assistance program; receives training in interviewing techniques, especially as they relate to eligibility determination; learns about various community resources, including public and private social service agencies as well as other sources of financial assistance such as Worker's Compensation, Social Security, etc., assists client in identifying/articulating problems, and refers clients to appropriate agencies for assistance; receives training in and applies principles of work planning and caseload management; reviews and learns to evaluate declaration forms and other documents for completeness, omission, need for verification/clarification, need for special services, etc.; interviews applicants/recipients to secure pertinent information and to provide information regarding agency policies and procedures, clients' rights and responsibilities, etc.; obtains/verifies information from collateral sources; identifies and discusses eligibility requirements with client documents necessary information, reviews facts, applies pertinent policies, and recommends or determines eligibility or denial of assistance on assigned cases; makes computations of income, expenditures, level of assistance benefits, etc.; recommends or authorizes payments, food stamps, etc.; recommends or determines duration of

eligibility, as necessary, depending on clients' personal circumstances and in accordance with departmental guidelines; completes various forms and prepares necessary correspondence and notifications; discusses with clients, client dissatisfaction, circumstances of suspected fraud, etc., gathers and evaluates facts, provides advice or assistance to clients, and prepares appropriate reports for supervisor's review; testifies in fraud or Fair Hearings; establishes positive relationships with clients and keeps abreast of policy clarifications and changes in order to interpret and apply policies correctly.

Knowledge and Abilities Required:

Knowledge of: Basic principles of oral and written communication; basic human needs and motivations; arithmetic.

Ability to: Learn the philosophy, goals, functions, policies, and procedures of pertinent State and Federal Public Assistance programs; learn interviewing techniques; communicate effectively with people of various social/economic/cultural backgrounds orally and in writing; learn about social services, benefits, and other related resources available through public and private agencies; acquire a basic understanding of various laws, practices, benefits, etc., that affect client resources/eligibility such as employee benefits, employment practices, real property ownership, self employment, etc., and related terminology; elicit pertinent information from others; gather, review, and evaluate facts; read, comprehend, interpret and apply rules, regulations, policies and procedures; exercise judgment and make logical and objective decisions; make basic mathematical computations, including percentages and averages; prepare clear and concise reports.

ELIGIBILITY WORKER II

3.083

Duties Summary:

Performs the full-range of eligibility determination work in a single public assistance program; or works as an advanced trainee in the determination of eligibility for a variety of public assistance programs; and performs other duties as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

Eligibility Worker II positions are typically of two types:

1. The independent worker performing the full-range of eligibility determinations in a single program area such as food stamps or medical assistance. The worker independently determines when information provided is insufficient, questionable or conflicting and seeks verification/documentation, as appropriate. Eligibility determinations made by the worker and food stamps or other payments/authorizations are considered final unless the client requests a fair hearing. A worker of this type receives general supervision although the supervisor is available to provide guidance in cases of questionable policy interpretation or cases which may be precedent-setting.
2. The advanced trainee in multiple program areas (must include financial assistance cases) where the worker applies an increased number of policies and procedures and eligibility requirements covering a variety of public assistance programs and, in addition, typically deals with more complex human relationship factors which in part result from the client's total or nearly total lack of resources. Simple to moderately complex cases are handled under relaxed supervision with closer supervision being provided when the more difficult and complex case assignments are made.

Examples of Duties:

Reviews and evaluates clients' self-declaration forms and other supporting documents for completeness, consistency, omissions, need for verification/clarification, need for special/urgent/services, etc.; interviews clients in office or clients' home to assist in completing application forms, to suggest ways to secure necessary evidence/documents, to provide information regarding agency policies and procedures, clients' rights and responsibilities, etc., and to create a climate that will encourage reporting of changes by the client; obtains/verifies information orally and/or in writing from various collateral sources in order to determine eligibility; discusses with clients various requirements for meeting conditions of eligibility and consequences of non-compliance; makes various computations such

as income from earnings, allowable expenses/deductions/costs, etc.; studies all necessary documents, reviews all facts, applies correct regulations/policies and determines or recommends eligibility or ineligibility; documents all facts, cites pertinent policies and authorizes payment, food stamps, etc.; determines duration of eligibility, as necessary, depending on client's personal circumstances and in accordance with departmental guidelines; completes various forms; prepares necessary correspondence and notifications; practices good caseload management such as planning reviews on timely basis, keeping controls on anticipated changes, etc.; discusses with clients any client dissatisfaction, identifies and explores issues, gathers relevant facts and attempts to resolve issues informally; evaluates community complaints; discusses with clients problems of intentional withholding of information and/or submission of false information; investigates possible recipient fraud and/or refers case to Division Investigator for in-depth investigation; prepares fair hearing, fraud and other reports; notifies client orally and/or in writing of any action taken on client's case; testifies in fair hearings or fraud hearings; establishes positive relationships with clients, discusses needs with clients and assists clients in identifying/articulating related problems; refers clients to appropriate public and private agencies for assistance and makes necessary arrangements for clients; attends various meetings, and training sessions; participates in special projects, committees, etc.; studies changes and proposed changes to pertinent rules, regulations, policies and procedures and recommends modifications and changes as necessary; keeps abreast of policy clarifications, precedent decisions, results of fair hearings and court cases, etc., in order to interpret and apply policies correctly; and participates in formulating unit objectives.

Knowledge and Abilities Required:

In addition to those knowledge and abilities required at the lower level;

Knowledge of: Philosophy, goals, functions, policies and procedures of pertinent State and Federal public assistance programs; legal rights of public assistance applicants/recipients; services, benefits and other resources available through public and private agencies; interviewing techniques; basic understanding of various laws, practices, benefits, etc., that affect client resources/eligibility such as employee

benefits, employment practices, real property ownership, self-employment, etc., and related terminology; basic money management; basic understanding of Public Assistance reporting and data processing requirements, including forms, deadlines, etc.; social services, benefits and other resources available through other public and private agencies; good working knowledge of various social, psychological, economic and emotional factors influencing the behavior and attitudes of individuals.

Ability to: Read, comprehend, interpret and apply pertinent rules, regulations, policies and procedures; review and understand pertinent legal/technical documents and other materials; establish rapport with clients; gain the confidence and cooperation of others; refer clients to appropriate public and private social service agencies and other related resources.

ELIGIBILITY WORKER III

3.084

Duties Summary:

Performs the full-range of eligibility determination work for a variety of public assistance programs including financial assistance cases; or determines eligibility in a single program area where all or nearly all of the assigned caseload consists of the most difficult and complex cases; and performs other duties as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

Eligibility Worker III positions are typically of two types:

1. The independent worker performing the full-range of eligibility determination for a variety of public assistance programs including food stamps, medical assistance and financial assistance. A worker of this type must know and apply a greater variety of program policies and procedures and eligibility requirements, and in addition must have a high degree of skill in interviewing and dealing with more complex human relationship factors resulting in part from the clients' total or nearly total lack of resources.



2. The senior worker who determines eligibility in a single program area where all or nearly all of the assigned caseload consists of the most difficult and complex cases.

The most difficult and complex cases in eligibility determination work for all Public Assistance programs can be identified as having combinations of the following factors present in the case (some factors do not appear in every program area):

- a. Variety of public assistance programs, policies, procedures, regulations, etc.
- b. Households with split categories - e.g., those where one family member may qualify for assistance under one category while other members qualify under other categories.
- c. Applicants/recipients 1) with emotional/psychiatric/personality problems - e.g., hostile, violent, desperate, alcoholic, manipulative, etc.; and/or 2) who are illiterate, mentally retarded or otherwise present extreme communication problems.
- d. Frequent changes in family/personal situations or unstable/ volatile family relationships.
- e. Irregular/frequently changing income from self-employment, intermittent jobs, etc.
- f. Ownership of property if it is a factor in determining eligibility.
- g. Third party resources (clients' insurance carrier in medical assistance).

Examples of Duties:

In general the work tasks performed by positions in this class are similar to those at the next lower level except that in a single program area assigned cases are pre-segregated so that they are consistently of a more difficult and complex nature. Therefore, a higher degree of skill is required in dealing with applicants/ recipients with

emotional/psychological/personality problems; a higher degree of caseload management skills are required in dealing with clients whose family/personal situations are unstable or frequently changing or when income is highly irregular/frequently changing, etc.; for certain positions more in-depth and varied program knowledge are necessary to determine categorical eligibility for households whose members qualify for assistance under different categories of assistance (AFDC, Aid to the Blind, etc.).

In addition to the duties described at the next lower level, the following are typical, ongoing, examples of duties of this class:

Reviews and evaluates self-declaration forms and other supporting documents for the most difficult and complex cases; interviews clients who are frequently hostile, desperate, frightened, evasive, etc., therefore presenting problems in fact-finding and verification of information and in helping clients in identifying/articulating needs and problems; reviews and evaluates family conditions, etc., in order to establish categorical eligibility; assists clients in resolving complicated problems in obtaining verification of information needed to complete the eligibility determination process.

Knowledge and Abilities Required:

In addition to those knowledge and abilities required at the lower level, this class requires knowledge of the principles, practices and techniques of determining applicants/recipients eligibility for public assistance programs; the ability to exercise a high degree of skill in interviewing and communicating effectively with people of varied social, economic and cultural backgrounds who are in social and financial distress, in addition to frequently exhibiting emotional/psychological/personality problems; ability to handle a workload virtually confined to the most complex and difficult cases; ability to read, comprehend, interpret and apply a wide variety of rules, regulations, policies and procedures to frequently changing, mixed-composition households.

ELIGIBILITY WORKER IV

3.085

Duties Summary:

Conducts internal reviews or validation studies of eligibility determinations; or serves as assistant supervisor of a large unit; and performs other duties as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

Income Maintenance Worker IV positions are typically of three types:

1. The worker who conducts an internal quality control review at the unit level to assess sufficiency of workers' verification/documentation of facts and assure the correctness of policy application in addition to identifying training needs, the need for policy clarification, etc. A position of this type is responsible for reviewing and evaluating case actions completed by other workers, resolving questionable situations of improper documentation, lack of verification, misinterpretation of policies, etc., and making recommendations for corrective actions. A position at this level also participates in assessing common problems amongst units and developing appropriate solutions.
2. The Quality Control Reviewer located in the Program Evaluation Office who conducts a review of sample cases to determine correctness of categorical eligibility determinations, payment amount and fulfillment of program requirements in addition to determining whether errors found are worker/agency or client errors and recommending corrective action. The Quality Control Reviewer verifies all case information through field visit interviews and collateral contacts. This type of position requires sound interviewing techniques and thorough knowledge of public assistance programs and Federal Quality Control policies and procedures.
3. The Assistant Supervisor of a large operational unit. Such a position works under a higher level Income Maintenance Worker and is responsible for planning, assigning and evaluating work performed by

subordinates, training eligibility workers and obtaining/providing clarification of policy. Some positions of this type may be located in a physically separate facility and may be responsible for establishing operating procedures, etc., for that office. A position of this type is frequently responsible for training activities for the unit.

Examples of Duties:

Type 1 positions: Selects a representative sample of cases for review; reviews and evaluates case actions including all aspects of the eligibility determination process, budget changes, documentation, etc.; identifies sources of errors and effect of errors; considers reason for error based on worker's response regarding error; may discuss reasons for error with worker; obtains policy clarification from higher level administrators or program development staff as necessary; makes recommendations on corrective action; compiles data on errors; identifies trends in errors as well as trends in reasons for errors; recommends changes in policies and procedures; identifies worker's training needs; prepares various statistical and narrative reports; discusses with unit supervisor observations on unit progress and problems, training needs of individual workers and unit staff in general, problem areas in policy/procedure application, etc., and assists supervisor in developing and/or implementing appropriate corrective measures; develops various forms and procedures relative to the internal quality control review process; plans, attends and/or presides over various meetings; attends and/or participates in staff training sessions; may plan and conduct staff training sessions; participates in section level meetings, the assessment of common problems in eligibility determination and the development of solutions; participates in special committees/projects; reviews case action of trainees and countersigns correct actions; performs eligibility determination work as necessary; keeps abreast of changes in program policies, procedures, etc.

Type 2 positions: Reviews in detail assigned sample cases; records all pertinent information on prescribed Federal and State forms; determines scope of field investigation required and conducts an independent verification of all relevant factors pertaining to eligibility and benefit level including home visits with clients, correspondence, telephone and/or personal interviews with collateral contacts such as employers,

representatives of public and private agencies and companies, etc.; makes computations; identifies specific defects in eligibility determinations, and payment status of the cases; determines probable cause of defect and identifies defects as "agency or worker caused" or "client caused"; recommends corrective action to be taken by Income Maintenance worker; prepares various critiques and reports to administrators and Income Maintenance workers, as necessary; keeps abreast of changes in program policies and procedures and the quality control process; participates in various meetings, seminars and training sessions; may testify in fraud and fair hearings.

Type 3 positions: Plans, assigns and reviews the work of lower level Income Maintenance Workers and clerical personnel; supervises and directs the review of applications for and redeterminations of financial assistance, medical assistance, food stamps and/or other benefits; develops and implements training plans for new workers; plans and conducts training sessions; plans and provides on-the-job training for new workers; identifies training needs, recommends content of training sessions required and identifies employees who should attend; encourages participation in training sessions; discusses and resolves difficult problems encountered by lower level workers; helps workers to understand and apply appropriate policies and procedures; evaluates work performance of subordinates in relation to standards of performance; helps workers to understand the general philosophy, purpose and goals of the Public Assistance Programs and their role in relation to the overall agency objectives; reviews actions of workers in relation to complaints and/or fair hearings; talks with workers, clients and others to resolve differences/ complaints informally, if possible; participates in fraud hearings and appeals; may participate in special projects or on committees; assists unit supervisor in evaluating unit needs, problems, etc., and in developing/defining unit objectives in accordance with departmental objectives, priorities and expectations; assists in developing and implementing methods and procedures to carry out unit objectives and to measure/maximize effectiveness and efficiency of unit operations; assists in developing unit operating plans; assists in evaluating unit needs with respect to supplies, equipment, office space, etc.; and makes appropriate recommendations; assists in interviewing and selecting new employees; makes recommendations on other personnel matters as necessary; completes forms and prepares various

reports, as required; and may carry out community relations activities.

Knowledge and Abilities Required:

In addition to those knowledge and abilities required at the lower levels, this class requires:

Type 1: The ability to review and evaluate case actions completed by other workers, resolving questionable situations of improper or lack of documentation, and misinterpretation of policies; ability to develop forms and procedures for conducting case reviews; ability to analyze type, frequency and reasons for errors and to recommend corrective actions.

Type 2: The ability to review and evaluate sample case actions including verification of information, determining correctness of categorical determination, payment amounts and fulfillment of program requirement; ability to learn Federal Quality Control policies and procedures; ability to identify defects in sample cases including all probable casual factors and to recommend corrective action.

Type 3: Ability to learn and apply principles and practices of supervision; ability to identify training needs, plan and implement training activities; ability to supervise a group of lower level Income Maintenance Workers and clerical personnel; ability to learn to recognize unit needs and problems; ability to learn departmental functions, objectives, operations and organization and their relation to the unit and its objectives and priorities; ability to assist in developing/defining unit objectives; ability to understand and explain the philosophy, purpose and goals of pertinent public assistance program(s).

In addition, for all three types: Thorough knowledge of the principles, practices, and techniques of determining applicants/ recipients eligibility for public assistance programs.

ELIGIBILITY WORKER V

3.086

Duties Summary:

Plans, organizes, directs, supervises and coordinates the

activities of an operational or quality control unit; and performs other duties as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This class reflects the full-time supervisor of an operational unit responsible for the determination of applicant/recipient entitlement for food stamps, medical assistance, financial assistance and/or other benefits; or the full-time supervisor of a quality control unit responsible for conducting field investigations of eligibility determination cases to determine correctness of actions, nature of errors, etc. The work of a person in this class also includes significant unit management responsibilities.

Examples of Duties:

Plans, assigns and reviews the work of lower level Income Maintenance Workers; supervises and directs the review of applications and redeterminations for financial assistance, medical assistance, food stamps and/or other benefits or supervises and directs the review of sampled cases processed by line operating eligibility determination units; discusses and resolves difficult problems encountered by subordinates; helps subordinates to understand and apply appropriate policies and procedures; identifies training needs of subordinates and conducts group conferences and training sessions as appropriate; reviews samples of records and other reports prepared by subordinates and evaluates the quality and quantity of work produced; analyzes data and prepares special reports as required; helps workers to understand the general philosophy, purpose and goals of the Public Assistance Programs and their role in relation to the overall agency objectives; reviews action of workers in relation to complaints and/or fair hearings and directs or makes such additional investigations as may be necessary; participates in fraud hearings and appeals; may participate in special projects or committees; evaluates unit needs, problems, etc., and develops/defines unit objectives in accordance with departmental objectives, priorities and expectations; develops and implements methods and procedures to carry out unit objectives and to measure/maximize effectiveness and efficiency of unit operations; develops unit operating plans; coordinates the work of the unit with other services in the department and participates in reviewing the department's Public Assistance Programs; coordinates work of the unit with other

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public and private agencies; discusses with departmental and other officials, legislators or any other interested person, any situation requiring supervisory attention regarding financial assistance, medical assistance payments or food stamps and/or other benefits; carries out community relations activities; evaluates unit needs with respect to supplies, equipment, office space, etc.; may make preliminary contacts with vendors and landlords and makes appropriate recommendations; makes recommendations on personnel matters such as recommendations for hire, personnel evaluation, promotions, demotions, dismissals, leaves of absence, etc.; may participate with Federal and State program development staff in developing policy and procedural changes; prepares operational reports and correspondence.

Knowledge and Abilities Required:

In addition to those knowledge and abilities required at the lower levels: ability to train others in the principles, practices and techniques of determining applicants/recipients entitlement for public assistance benefits; knowledge of the principles and practices of office management; ability to evaluate unit needs, problems, etc., and to make appropriate recommendations; ability to develop and implement methods and procedures to carry out unit objectives and to measure effectiveness and efficiency of unit operations; ability to carry out community relations activities.